

I Give to You

Ebishi Maki



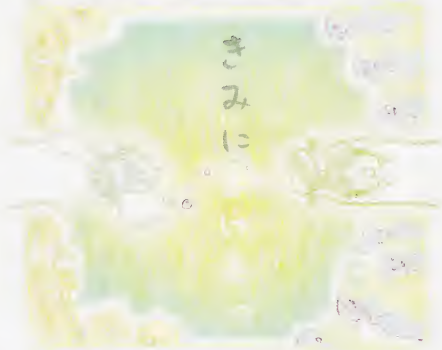
きみにあげる。



Shojo Manga

When Ryoichi is betrayed by his lover and forced into crippling debt, he runs away...only to find himself seeking shelter from a flash deluge in a secluded tea shop. The owner Ren quietly takes him in and allows him to work in exchange for a roof over his head, but Ryoichi can't deny the deeper bond forming in the depths of his wounded heart. Can two men with terrible pasts free themselves and figure out what they truly feel?

I Give to You



I Give To You simmers with the sweet, steamy temptation of true friendship, surprising attraction and an old obligation that threatens to destroy everything! When you've done everything in your power to leave your former life behind, the future should be open wide...but can trust be regained when every lingering shadow and nightmare carries with it the threat of bitter betrayal?



I Give to You

Ebishi Maki

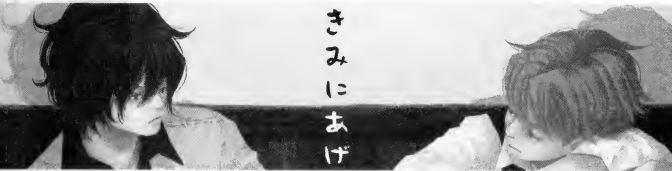
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TAIYOH
TOSHO

June

I Give to You

Ēbishi Maki



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I Give to You
Afterword

005
211

...IS
REJECTING
ME.

THE
WORLD...

KABOOOOOM



I GIVE TO YOU









CLINK CLINK



KONK

IT
MAKES
ME
HAPPY.



I'LL MAKE
SOME TEA
AND GIVE
IT TO
YOU.



I'M
DREN-
CHED

—OH. UH.
...BY CHANCE,
THIS
LETTER—

WELL,
SINCE YOU
WOULDN'T BE
HERE IF YOU
DIDN'T LIKE
IT...IT'S FINE.

HE
SAID...
"GIVE"
...



IMPRESSED
GO



IT FEELS
LIKE HE'S
SAYING
EXACTLY
WHAT I NEED
HIM TO SAY.



I'M
REALLY
GRATE-
FUL...



I GUESS
IT'S THAT
GUY'S
FAVORITE
WORD...

I'LL GIVE YOU A SEAT.
I'LL GIVE YOU MY
DELICIOUS TEA.

TEA EFIL

...TO HEAR
THAT ASSERTIVE
TONE OF VOICE
RIGHT NOW.

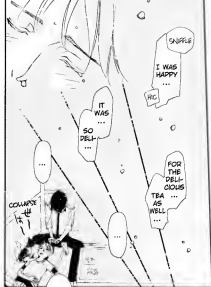














FEELING
THIS
WAY...



CHAPTER 2





OH, GOOD MORNING!

OH, GOOD MORNING! TO YOU!



N-NO!

THAT A PROBLEM?



OH.

THANKS.

IN ANY CASE, I PUT SOME CLOTHES FOR YOU TO WEAR OVER THERE.



...HMM?

THIS IS...



IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER WORN THIS...

SAMUE ARE REALLY COMFORTABLE, HUH?



OH MY GOD, YOU'RE RIGHT

SOMEONE'S STARRING AT US.

OH MY GOD, YOU'RE RIGHT

HOLD ON A MINUTE

HEY...



THANKS TO YOU, I WAS ABLE TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR MONTHS.

YES!

YEP...

YOUR FEVER IS GONE.



I'VE BEEN RUNNING AWAY FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS.

NO...

FOUR MONTHS?

BUT REALLY, I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SLEEP SINCE I WAS BETRAYED FOUR MONTHS AGO...

YOU'VE BEEN RUNNING AWAY FOR THAT LONG?



HOW MUCH DID I TELL YOU? MY MEMORY'S A LITTLE FUZZY...

HUH? WH... I'M SORRY...

YOUR LOVER LEFT HIS DEBTS TO YOU AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS, RIGHT?



THE COST OF THE TEA... AS WELL.

HAA...

JUST THAT YOUR LOVER BETRAYED YOU AND THAT YOU'RE IN DEBT FOR 13 MILLION AND SIX HUNDRED YEN.

HMM?









BUT IT'S NOT
ATTRACTIVE.



UH,
OKAY.
WEST
LAKE
DRAGON
WELL?

ONE CUP
OF WEST
LAKE
DRAGON
WELL.

HUH?

WEST
LAKE
DRAGON
WELL...

HUMPH...
OH...
WANT A
MENU?



I'LL DO
IT. GIVE
IT TO
ME.



HUH?



YOUR
FACE
DOESN'T
LOOK EVEN
THE
SLIGHTEST
BIT SAD.



OH, YOU'RE
WIPING THE
COUNTER
DOWN?



DON'T
WORRY ABOUT
IT. IT WASN'T
YOUR FAULT.

















HE'S
NOTHING
MORE THAN
AN IDIOT.



WHAT THE
HELL WAS
THAT
ABOUT?



YOU'RE
NOT
PROTECTING
HIM, ARE
YOU?



ABOVE
ALL...

NOW,
AT LEAST,
HE'S WORK-
ING IN A TEA
SHOP.

IF YOU'RE A
FORMER YAKUZA,
HOW MUCH
YAKUZA DOES
THAT MAKE
YOU?

IT'S PART
OF JAPANESE
CULTURE...

IT MAKES
ME SAD TO BE
TOLD THAT I
HAVE NOTHING
TO DO WITH IT.



...NO SCARY
PEOPLE
HAVE COME
TO GET ME...

FOR
NOW.

I WOULD
NEVER HAVE
GUESSED THAT
ABOUT REN
JUST BY
LOOKING AT
HIM, BUT...



IT'S LIKE
THEY'RE
DENYING
THAT WE
EVER HAD ANY
CONNECTION
TO EACH
OTHER!

THAT'S WHY
EVERYONE'S
BEEN
TERRIFIED
OF ME
RECENTLY!

THAT
HAS
NOTHING
TO DO
WITH
THIS, SO
ZIP IT.

ISN'T
THAT
YOUR
PROBLEM?

I WAS
ALL
ALONE!!







I...
OWE
A DEBT
TO REN.

...



AFTER
ALL,
THAT'S
THE
KIND OF
PERSON
THAT THE
REN THAT
I MET IS.

THAT'S
WHAT
HE'D DO.

CLATTER
CLATTER



I
TOLD
YOU,
DIDN'T
I?

HE'LL
LEAVE
ON HIS
OWN.

THAT'S
HOW THIS
WORLD
WORKS.



OPEN
UP!

CLATTER
CLATTER
CLATTER

CLATTER
CLATTER
CLATTER

SO I'LL
PREPARE
DINNER
FOR TWO,
THEN?
YEAH.



REN...

THIS IS WHO HE IS.

PRESS



YOU... ARE...

I DIDN'T

AHH...



AH!

IS HE BLUSHING?



KISS



I'M SO HUNGRY...



HAA



IF IT'S ABOUT THE 600 YEN, LET'S JUST CALL IT EVEN.

AH.
THANKS.



YOU GAVE ME SOMETHING WORTH MUCH MORE THAN THAT, REN.



CHAPTER 3



THANK
YOU.

THAT'S
WHAT I
BELIEVE.



...BELIEVE
IN MYSELF.

...
OPEN UP!
I TRULY
APOLOGIZE!
PLEASE OPEN
THE DOOR!



GOT
IT.



MAKE
DINNER
FOR
THREE.



THAT WAS
A TOKEN OF
GRATITUDE
JUST NOW!

RENT!
ARE YOU
MAD? I DID
IT! MAKE
YOU MAD?
I'm in!!

RITSU.

I'M
REALLY
SORRY!

NO
CLATTER
CLATTER

CLATTER
CLATTER





?!



...YES.

BECAUSE
I DIDN'T
KNOW WHERE
HE WAS GOING
TO GO
SHOPPING...



DIDN'T YOU
SAY EARLIER
THAT YOU HAD
NO IDEA WHERE
THIS GUY
WAS?

AH...
NO...



SO
THAT'S
IT.

...
HMM



STARTING
TOMORROW,
GO RIGHT
BEFORE WE
OPEN THE
SHOP.

HEY.



9 SYRUPEN

...NOT
REALLY.

IS THERE
A PROBLEM
WITH HIM
ASKING TO GO
THIS TIME,
TOO?

UHH!

IT'S
STINK!

UHH!

IT'S
STINK!

UHH!

IT'S
STINK!

UHH!

IT'S
STINK!

UHH!

IT'S
STINK!

UHH!

IT'S
STINK!

UHH!



HEY, IS
THAT WHAT
HAPPENED?



...ASKED
RITSU?



WELL,
THAT'S WHY
I ASKED
RITSU IF
I COULD
DO IT.



CRUSH
PRESS

DID
HE SAY
THAT,
RITSU?

IN DEEP
CONCENTRATION!

WHAAA-
AAT?!
HE'S
HERE?!

ROADSIDE'S ATTRACTED
RICE-BRAN STINK MUST BE
MOVED EVERY DAY.

TEXT CONTROL

CRUSH
PRESS



CAN'T I BE?

YES.

I TOLD YOU... YOU'RE WORKING WITH YAKUZA.



CAN I GET YOU "THE USUAL"?

WELCOME TO OUR SHOP.

THIS WAY, PLEASE

WHAT'S THIS? YOU'RE STILL HERE.



THAT'S NOT REALLY THE PROBLEM.

THEY'RE NOT LIKE THAT ANYMORE.

DON'T YOU GET IT...?

SAME AS EVER...



YEAH...

OH.

OKAY!

RITSU-SAN...?

I WONDER WHY RITSU COVERED FOR ME WHEN I LIED...

I THOUGHT HE DIDN'T LIKE ME...

THOUGH I'VE ALWAYS HAD TROUBLE UNDERSTANDING HIM...

あははははは
あははははは
あははははは



DIOT...



WELL,
THANK
YOU FOR
WORRYING
ABOUT
ME.

THOSE TYPES
HAVE A HABIT
OF CHANGING
THEIR ATTITUDE
SOONER OR
LATER.



HAVING ME
AROUND ISN'T
BENEFICIAL
TO THEM AT
ALL.

BUT I'M
ACTUALLY
SOMEONE WHO'S
RUNNING AWAY
FROM A HUGE
DEBT.

URS...



YEAH.

AND,
BESIDES...

IS...
IS THAT
SO?



YAKUZA
AREN'T THE
ONLY ONES WHO
SUDDENLY
CHANGE THEIR
ATTITUDES.



NO, I
DON'T
GET IT.

HE DID
ME A HUGE
FAVOR AND
REALLY HELPED
ME OUT.

I'D NEVER
DO ANYTHING
THAT MIGHT HARM
HIM, OR MAKE HIM
FEEL HATED OR
HURT.







YES.



...I JUST MADE DELICIOUS TEA. COME OVER HERE AND HAVE SOME.

RITSU...



IS SOMETHING WRONG?



NO.



I CAN'T SAY IT, THOUGH. WHAT THE HELL IS UP WITH THIS ATMOSPHERE?

EVEN REN...

RITSU'S UNCOVERED FACE IS REALLY COOL...

IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN IT



YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE ONE SUPPORTER LEFT.

...TOHKI NOW THAT HE'S RUN AWAY TO THIS PLACE...

YOU'RE AN IDIOT...
RITSU.



HEHE.
SO SIMPLE. DON'T YOU KNOW...

...THAT THE RAT TRAPS THAT YOU LAD OUT MADE A GOOD "MEAL" FOR ME?
YOU'VE GOTTEN STUPID...
RITSU.



REN IS THE ONLY SUPPORTER I'VE HAD SINCE THE BEGINNING.

POOP

...TOHKI.







I CAN BE
HERE LIKE THIS
WITH YOU 'CAUSE I
WAS BURDENED
WITH ALL THAT
DEBT.

WHEN I
THINK ABOUT IT
THAT WAY, EVEN
THE BAD THINGS
DON'T SEEM
SO BAD
...Y'KNOW.



I'VE
GOT TO
LET IT
GO...



EVEN IF TERRIBLE
THINGS HAPPENED
IN THE PAST, YOU
WOULDN'T BE
WHERE YOU ARE
NOW WITHOUT
THEM...

BUT IF
YOU LET THE
PAST THAT YOU
WANT TO FORGET
AFFECT YOU, THEN
THE PRESENT
BECOMES
MEANINGLESS,
AND THAT'S
STUPID...



HLIH?



LIVING
YOUR LIFE
THIS WAY...
DOES IT
MAKE YOU
HAPPY?

BEING
HERE...

CLANG

REN,
ARE YOU
HAPPY
NOW?



BEEN
THINKING
A LOT
RECENTLY.

I'VE
JUST...

SO
ABRUPT...

YOU'RE
ALWAYS...

BUT... YOU KNOW...

...THAT I WOULD TRULY FORGIVE ANYTHING YOU DID.

I HOLD YOU IN SUCH HIGH ESTEEM, REN...

BUT... YOU KNOW...

...THAT I WOULD TRULY FORGIVE ANYTHING YOU DID.

I HOLD YOU IN SUCH HIGH ESTEEM, REN...

BUT... YOU KNOW...

...THAT I WOULD TRULY FORGIVE ANYTHING YOU DID.

I HOLD YOU IN SUCH HIGH ESTEEM, REN...

BUT... YOU KNOW...

...THAT I WOULD TRULY FORGIVE ANYTHING YOU DID.

I HOLD YOU IN SUCH HIGH ESTEEM, REN...

BUT... YOU KNOW...

...THAT I WOULD TRULY FORGIVE ANYTHING YOU DID.

I HOLD YOU IN SUCH HIGH ESTEEM, REN...

BUT... HOW YOU FEEL HAS CHANGED PRETTY DRASTICALLY, EH?



BUT...
HOW YOU
FEEL HAS
CHANGED
PRETTY
DRASTICALLY, EH?

YOU'RE STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM IT.

YOU'RE STILL IN THE MIDDLE OF TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM IT.

THAT'S SUCH A DIFFICULT THING...

IS THERE NO END TO YOUR SIMPLICITY?

IT'S THANKS TO YOU, REN.

IS THERE NO END TO YOUR SIMPLICITY?

IT'S THANKS TO YOU, REN.

YOU SHOULD BE MORE SUSPICIOUS OF PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW!!

THAT'S WHY YOU GET BETRAYED BY PEOPLE.

YOU SHOULD BE MORE SUSPICIOUS OF PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW!!

THAT'S WHY YOU GET BETRAYED BY PEOPLE.





"YEP! TODAY IS FEBRUARY 14", RIGHT?"

"HAHAHA. THAT'S A DAY FOR WOMEN TO GIVE MEN CHOCOLATE, THOUGH."



"WHAT? YOU'RE GIVING IT TO ME?"

"GOOD MORNING, SENSEI. HERE, I BROUGHT VALENTINE'S CHOCOLATE!"



"AND THEN ON MARCH 14", WHITE DAY, THE BOYS GIVE THEIR ANSWER TO THE CONFESSION. SO YOU JUST GIVE AN ANSWER, I GUESS."



"WELL, YES. BUT VALENTINE'S DAY IS FOR GIRLS TO CONFESS TO BOYS BY GIVING THEM CHOCOLATE."



"IF YOU GET CHOCOLATE FROM ANY OF THE GIRLS, BE KIND AND ACCEPT IT. OKAY?"

"IN ANY CASE, ALL YOU DO TODAY IS RECEIVE CHOCOLATE, INUUMA-KUN!"



SOMEHOW... I THOUGHT REN AND I MIGHT PLAY FOR THE SAME TEAM BUT...

REN'S BODY WENT COMPLETELY STIFF.

THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T TOUCH HIM.

SEEMS LIKE...

HE'S NORMAL.

THAT... REALLY BUMS ME OUT.

HE'S STRAIGHT, AFTER ALL...















THERE'S A LARGE QUANTITY OF HIS FAVORITE DONUTS STORED IN HIS ROOM FOR SAFE-KEEPING. SO THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.



CLICK



JUST ONE MORE TIME.





YOU DIDN'T
MISTAKE SUGAR
FOR SALT WHEN
YOU MADE
THEM, DID
YOU?



I DON'T
THINK ANYONE
WOULD DO
THAT, WOULD
THEY?

I LOOKED
AT...THE
LABELS...



...NG!



HE SAID
THE EXACT-
SAME
THING.

IT WAS
JUST LIKE
YOU SAID.



CRUNCH



I MADE
SOME RICE
BALLS...





...WHY AM
I ALWAYS
THE ONE
BEING
RESCUED?



EVEN
THOUGH I'D
GLADLY DO
ANYTHING
FOR REN...



I...

...LIKE
YOU, REN!
I LOVE
YOU.



VS...

...I...

WHY...
DOES
SUCH A
KIND
PERSON...



...HAVE
TO BE
DESPISED
BY
OTHERS?



I'M SO...
CRUEL...

YOU'RE
AN
IDIOT.

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WHO'S BEEN
ABANDONED.

DON'T
CONFUSE
WHICH
POSITION
YOU'RE
IN...

YOU'RE
THE ONE
WHO WAS
WRONGED.

WHY...



THE
MISUNDER-
STANDING IS ON YOUR
PART, THOUGH.

WELL...

...THERE
SEEMS TO
BE SOME KIND
OF MISUNDER-
STANDING...

WHEN
I'M WITH
YOU...

LET'S
PRETEND
THAT THIS
DIDN'T
HAPPEN,
TOO.

SO...

...LOOK
AT ME
LIKE
THAT.

REN
...?

PLEASE,
DON'T...

MIS...
UNDER-
STANDING?

THEN
WHY KISS
ME?

YOU'RE
THE ONE
THAT DID
THAT,
AREN'T
YOU?!

...WHY?





CHAPTER 5



REN...

I CAN'T
ASK A
THING...

NOT EVEN
ABOUT THE
MEANING OF
THAT KISS,
EITHER...

...ABOUT
THE TENSE
ATMOSPHERE
BETWEEN THE
TWO OF THEM.

AND
THEN...

...REN
ACTED
JUST LIKE
NOTHING
HAD
HAPPENED.

...FOR THE
OLD MAN
WHO COMES
BY TO
INSPECT
HIM.

TODAY,
TOO, HE'S
MAKING TEA
WITHOUT
SAYING A
WORD...

SEEMS
LIKE SOMEONE
WAS ATTEMPTING
TO TRESPASS
ON OUR
PROPERTY.

RITSU!
WHAT
HAPPEN-
ED?

GO
PREPARE
THE BOSS'S
MEAL.

RITSU...

IS
SOME-
THING
WRONG?

TOH-
KI...

CLICK

PRO-
BABLY
JUST A
STUPID
BURGLAR.

NO. I CAUGHT A
GLANCE OF THE
TRESPASSER,
AND IT WAS
SOMEONE
ELSE.

WHA,
THE GLASS
BROKE

MREOW!

AH, YOU
CAN'T
WALK
THERE.

I'LL TAKE
A LOOK
OUTSIDE
JUST TO
BE SAFE.



...DID YOU CATCH A COLD?

MORE IMPORTANTLY...

ORIGINALLY, PEOPLE STARTED DRINKING TEA AS MEDICINE.

SHE WAS SAYING THAT YESTERDAY...

SO JUST A TASTING SIZE, PLEASE

OH, NOT ME. THE SHOP OWNER, YAMADA, HIS WIFE DID.

HUH... I DIDN'T KNOW THAT...

I DIDN'T HEAR ANYTHING ABOUT THAT.

HMM...

YEAH. I DIDN'T LIVE IN THIS HOUSE, THOUGH.

REN... WERE YOU RAISED IN THIS AREA?

OR SOMETHING...

A TEA... THAT HAS THE EFFECT OF SOOTHING THE PAIN OF A SORE THROAT...

HMM?

A-A TEA...

I'VE GOT TO BREAK THE TENSION SOMEHOW!

WHIRL

THERE IS.

...ANYTHING LIKE THAT, IS THERE?

THERE ISN'T...

FLOWERS AND SEEDS AND STUFF...?

YOU CAN DRINK THAT AS TEA?

IF IT'S AN INFLAMMATION, SOMETHING WITH JAPANESE HONEY-SUCKLE MIXED IN IS GOOD.

CHINESE HERBAL TEA HAS MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF EFFECTS.

AND THEN SOME MANDO GRASS.

AND THAT...

WHAT? THEN I CAN PAY YOU WITH MY BODY INSTEAD.

SOMEONE WITH NOTHING TO THEIR NAME SHOULDN'T ACT SO SELF-IMPORTANT.

IT'S NOTHING. JUST PUT THE CHARGE ON MY TAB.

GOES FOR THE PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AS WELL.

OH?

YOU ACTUALLY REMEMBERED?

OH MY, TEA THAT'S GOOD FOR YOUR THROAT?!

EVEN THOUGH I ONLY MENTIONED IT IN PASSING...

YOU'RE SO KIND.

THANK YOU.

THE MORE THAT I UNDERSTAND ABOUT REN...

...THE MORE I UNDERSTAND HIS LONELINESS.

HE'S... KIND, TOO.

REN... WHY...

THE PERSON WHO MADE THAT TEA IS ALSO A KIND PERSON.

OH, BECAUSE OF THE EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE JUST NOW WHEN YOU THOUGHT OF HER.

?

YOU REALLY LOVED YOUR GRAND-MOTHER, HUH?

AMMM?

CLENCH

THIS RESIDENCE BELONGED TO MY LATE GRAND-MOTHER.

...HAD NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF EXPRESSION WAS ON HIS FACE...?

IT'S COMING OUT IN HIS ATTITUDE, TOO.

HE'S MOVING REALLY FAST ALL OF A SUDDEN.

COULD IT BE THAT REN...

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW YOURSELF AT ALL, REN...

SIGH...

WHAT?







THE WAY THEY REACT TO ME IS DIFFERENT... AND THE WAY THEY REACT TO ME IS DIFFERENT.

BUT AT FIRST, THEY SHINNED ME AS WELL.



THAT WASN'T AT ALL WHAT I WAS TRYING TO DO...

WHAT A MOOD-KILLER.

HAVEN'T YOU NOTICED?



BUT ALL THEY KNOW IS THAT YOU'RE A "FORMER YAKUZA," RIGHT?

YOU SAY THAT THE NEIGHBORHOOD PEOPLE KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU.

THAT'S NOT IT!

THAT'S WHAT CAUSES TROUBLE FOR THEM.

THEN IT'S YOUR CHARACTER, GOOD FOR YOU.

TROUBLE ...?



SEEMS LIKE YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND TEA AND CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE.

OH...MY, IS THAT SO...?

HE MADE THAT TEA FOR YOU.



OH, NO, I TOLD YOU IT WAS FINE.

I...I'D BETTER PAY YOU FOR IT...



REALLY, REALLY.

UH... REALLY?

IN THAT CASE, FEEL FREE TO JUST PROP BY AT THE TEA SHOP.

BUT... I FEEL BAD...



YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WIN THEM OVER BY GIVING THEM THINGS.

HUH?

THE PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD KNOW ALL ABOUT ME. NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, IT'S USELESS.



THEN
YOU MIGHT
AS WELL
JUST RUN
AWAY!



THAT'S
WHAT I...
ENDED UP
DOING.

THEN YOU
CAN JUST
RUN AWAY
AND GO
TO A SAFE
PLACE.

...IF
YOU'RE
NOT
GOING
TO GET
OVER
THE WALL...



THAT'S
ALL...

I EVER
DID...

YOU...



IF YOU'RE
WITH ME,
THEY'LL GIVE
YOU THE COLD
SHOULDER.

SO I
WON'T GO
OUT WITH
YOU EVER
AGAIN.



LOOK.

WHETHER
THEY'RE GOOD
PEOPLE OR NOT
HAS NOTHING
TO DO WITH
THIS.

WAIT...
WHY DOES
IT HAVE TO
BE LIKE
THAT?

EVERYONE
HAS THEIR
OWN PERSONAL
WALLS THAT
THEY CAN'T GET
OVER.

TRY
MEETING
THEM
HALFWAY!
THEY'RE ALL
GOOD
PEOPLE...

WHY DO
YOU ALWAYS
HAVE TO LET
YOURSELF
BE TIED
DOWN BY
YOUR PAST?







"HEY, WHAT
DO YOU WANT
FROM ME? WHAT
DO YOU WANT
ME TO DO?"

"I'LL DO
ANYTHING
IF I'M DOING
IT FOR YOU."

"WHAT
DO YOU
DESIRE?"

"YOU'RE
ALL I HAVE
IN THIS
WORLD."

"YOU'RE
THE ONLY
FAMILY I
HAVE."

REN...

"EVERY DAY, MY
WORLD WAS PURE
DARKNESS. UNTIL
I MET YOU, IT WAS
UTTERLY FILLED WITH
DARKNESS."









SUDDENLY...
IT MUST
HAVE
SURPRISED
YOU.

SORRY.

OH...

UNDER-
STOOD.

IT'LL
BE
FINE.

DO IT.

CLATCH



HAH...

BECAUSE
YOU'RE SO
POPULAR...IF
YOU MAKE A
MOVE, THEY ALL
MAKE A MOVE.
DON'T DRAG
THEM INTO
THIS.

BUTTING
IN AND
MAKING A
MOVE...

YOU MEAN
THE FORMER
FAMILY, DON'T
YOU?!



AND?

SUPPORTERS
...?

I LOST
HW, BUT OUR
SUPPORTERS
ARE ALREADY
ON THE
MOVE.



HAH...

FOR NOW,
YOU'D BETTER
HURRY AND
GET EVERYONE
TO BACK THE
HELL OFF,
GOT IT?!

R...
REN...?



HAH...

HE HAS
NO QUALMS
ABOUT USING
GUYS WHO DON'T
HESITATE TO KILL.
HE'S PROBABLY
USING THEM
ALREADY...

TOHKI IS
DANGER-
OUS.



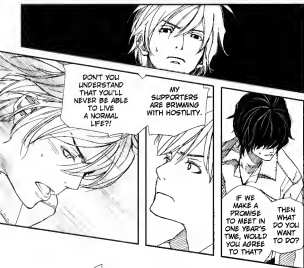
BUT...



RITSU,
BEFORE YOU
DO ANYTHING,
LET TOHKI
KNOW ABOUT
THIS PLACE.

AT THIS
POINT, THE
POLICE ARE
PROBABLY
MOVING,
TOO...





DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LIVE A NORMAL LIFE?!

MY SUPPORTERS ARE BRIMMING WITH HOSTILITY.

IF WE MAKE A PROMISE TO MEET IN ONE YEAR'S TIME, WOULD YOU AGREE TO THAT?

THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?

NO...



I'M GAY.



IT'S BETTER...

YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM ME.
YOU COULD GO BACK TO LIVING A NORMAL LIFE.

ONCE YOU'VE FINISHED BREAKFAST, GET OUT OF HERE.

...FOR YOU TO HOLD ON TO THAT AS LONG AS YOU CAN.

I DON'T WANT TO.



I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE HERE THAT WAY!

IT'S RIDICULOUS TO LEAVE IT LIKE WE'LL NEVER SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN.



BECAUSE
NO MATTER WHAT,
I CAN'T BECOME
WHAT THIS
WORLD CONSIDERS
NORMAL.

EVEN
NOW, I
PRETTY MUCH
STILL THINK
THAT WAY.



YOU
TOLD ME
THAT I'M
NORMAL.

REN.



HOW
MUCH
I...

...FEEL
FOR YOU...



DO YOU
HAVE ANY
IDEA HOW
HAPPY
THAT MAKES
ME?

YOU CAN'T
POSSIBLY
UNDERSTAND
HOW GRATEFUL
I AM TO YOU
FOR THAT.



ME.
WHO'S BEEN
ABANDONED BY
EVERYONE I'VE
EVER KNOWN
FOR ONE
REASON OR
ANOTHER.

THAT
MEANS
YOU
ACCEPTED
ME.



I'M...

I'M A
MAN, BUT I
HAVE FEELINGS
FOR YOU,
ANOTHER
MAN.

...HUI?

...SAYING
THAT I'VE
NEVER LIVED
A NORMAL
LIFE.



AH.

THE WAY I
THINK AND MY
BEHAVIOR IS
WRONG. NO
ONE EVER
ACCEPTED
ME.

...I'VE
LIVED WITH
THE UNDER-
STANDING
THAT I'M
NOT
NORMAL.

EVER
SINCE I
WAS A CHILD,
ALL THIS
TIME...





FROM THE
TIME I WAS
LITTLE, I WAS
THE CHILD THAT
ALL THE ADULTS
SHUNNED.



BUT WHEN
THEY NOTICED,
ALL THE KIDS
I'D BEEN
FRIENDS WITH
DISAPPEARED.

SOMETIMES
IT TOOK A
WHILE.



EVEN THOUGH
I KNEW THAT
IT WAS MY FAMILY'S
FAULT, TIME DIDN'T
HEAL MY WOUNDS.



AND THE
GRUDGE I
BORE TOWARD
MY FATHER
AND MY FAMILY
GREW.



YOU
HAVEN'T
DONE
ANYTHING
WRONG.

IT'S
OKAY.



IT'S
OKAY.



HAVE
ANY BASIS
FOR THAT,
EITHER...

...YOU
DON'T...

HA







...
IT'S OKAY
IF IT DOES.
I KNOW...
THAT I
BECAME
HIS
PROPERTY

I KNEW
WHAT I'D
BEEN TRULY
HOPING
FOR...

...BUT IN
REALITY, IT
WAS A
MISTAKE...



PRETTY
MUCH EVERY-
THING WAS
SET UP BY
HIM.

TOH-
KI...
MADE MY
WISHES
COME
TRUE.

TOHKI'S
BEEN RUNNING
AWAY FROM
BOTH THE
POLICE AND THE
SHIRAKAWA
FAMILY EVER
SINCE.

MY FATHER
WAS SHOT BY
SOME PUNKS WHO
WERE IN OPPOSITION
TO THE SHIRAKAWA
FAMILY, AND IT
DROVE THE FAMILY
INTO RUIN...



WHenever it
got to be too
much for me,
I would go and
hide in Ritsu's
room.

RITSU WAS THE
ONLY ONE WHO
KNEW ABOUT OUR
RELATIONSHIP. TOHKI
HAD THE MOST
TROUBLE DEALING
WITH RITSU, SO I
WAS SAFE THERE.

I KNEW THAT
TOHKI'S
ATTACHMENT TO
ME WAS BECOMING
MORE AND MORE
CRUEL, BUT I
COULDN'T RESIST
HIM, EITHER.

IF I
FORGAVE
HIM
ONCE...

...HE STARTED
APPEARING
EVERY NIGHT...



...THERE WAS
SOMETHING
NICE ABOUT
IT FOR ME,
TOO...



IT WAS AN
ABNORMAL
KIND OF LOVE,
BUT...



DOES IT
DISGUST
YOU?









FINAL CHAPTER







TO OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS.

AT LAST, WE HAVE NO CONNECTION...

I CAN LIVE ANYWHERE...

AS LONG AS YOU'RE WITH ME...

WE CAN LIVE TOGETHER IN HAPPINESS FROM NOW ON, JUST THE TWO OF US.

ABSOLUTELY ANYWHERE.



??

THIS GUY... HE WAS WITH YOU YESTERDAY, TOO.



I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT...



THAT'S NOT FUNNY...

KISS

TO FORCE YOU TO SURRENDER.



WHAT'S UP? YOU SEEM UPSET SOMEHOW.

...



I MADE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE... RIGHT, REN?

I DID SOMETHING AMAZING, DIDN'T I?

EVEN THOUGH I CAME BACK THINKING THAT YOU'D HAVE SO MUCH PRAISE FOR ME...

WHY?



CAN BE FREE.

AND NOW, WE...

TOHKI...

SQUIRE









THEY
RIDE THE
WIND...

I LIKE
WATCHING
THEM.

HA...

...AND FLY
AWAY TO
FREEDOM.

I JUST
WANTED
TO GIVE IT
TO YOU...

FREEDOM.

AREN'T
YOU...

...A LITTLE
OLD TO BE
PLAYING WITH
SOAP
BUBBLES?



DIDN'T
I SET YOU
FREE?

TOHKL...

DIDN'T I
GIVE YOU
YOUR
FREEDOM?

I...

EVERYTHING
WAS MY FAULT.
I'M THE BAD
ONE.

I
UNDER-
STAND.

THAT'S
NOT IT.
THAT'S
NOT
WHAT I
WANT!

NO!

I DON'T
CARE IF
I GO TO
PRISON.

I'LL
TAKE
THE
PUNISH-
MENT.

THAT'S
NOT IT,
REN.

I
JUST...



I DEFINITELY
AM, TOO.

HUG



...THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I FEEL HAPPY ALL OF A SUDDEN.

I DON'T... REALLY KNOW.

WHEN HE'S AROUND...

ALL OF A SUDDEN?

BUT I WASN'T HAPPY.

YOU WEREN'T HAPPY WHEN YOU WERE WITH ME?

I WAS RELIEVED, BECAUSE WE BOTH SHARED THE SAME EXPERIENCES.

TOHKI, YOU...

IF YOU ASK ME WHAT...

...DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THAT GUY?

THAT DAY...

AFTER...

I WAITED IT OUT WHILE DOING NOTHING BUT GULPING DOWN TEA.

I WANT TO TALK TO HIM, HE SAID.

HE'LL JUST TALK, HE SAID.

DON'T WORRY, GUY SAID.

REN SAID HE WANTED TO SPEND THE DAY WITH HIS BROTHER ONE-ON-ONE, SO THEY SHUT THEMSELVES UP IN HIS ROOM.

YOU REALLY SUCK AT THIS.

AS I SUSPECTED.

BUT HIS EXPRESSION REMAINED TOTALLY CALM.

HAD?

WHY IS?

GUSH! THAT DAY WAS CRAZY.

HE WAS TALKING LIKE HE WANTED TO KILL TOHKI FOR DOING IT.

HALFWAY THROUGH, RITSU-SAN APPEARED WITH BLOOD GUSHING FROM A HEAD WOUND HE'D GOTTEN.





SINCE THEN, I'VE HAD THIS TERRIBLE FEELING IN MY HEART FOR SOME REASON.







BOO.
BOO.
BOO.
I HAVEN'T
EVEN DONE
ANYTHING
YET...

YOU...
TOLD ME
THAT
YOU'RE
SCARED AT
NIGHT.

WHAT
AM I
DOING?

IT MAKES
YOU NERVOUS
TO BE
TOUCHED
AND YOU GO
COMPLETELY
STIFF.

BUT YOU
ACCEPTED
ME.

... YOU
DOZED
OFF.

JUST
LIKE
THAT...



MY PAST
AND MY
FUTURE...

MY MONEY
AND
PROPERTY.



AND MY
BODY. I'LL
GIVE IT ALL
TO YOU.

MY
HEART.



WH, DON'T
DIE ON
ME...
JUST
FROM
THAT.

AH?

I
COULD
DIE...
HAPPY
NOW.

FANT







I KNEW
IT. YOU'RE A
HAPPY PERSON,
AREN'T YOU?



REN'S
TALKING
LIKE HE'S
SICK OF
ME.

YOU REALLY
TICK ME OFF
SOMETIMES.
YOU GET MORE
AND MORE
OBVIOUS IF I
GET USED TO
IT, I GUESS
IT WON'T
BOTHER ME
THOUGH.



HUH?



WHERE
ARE YOU
GOING?!

WHA...

REN!

BUT
AFTER
THAT...

TO GO
MAKE TEA
FOR YOUR
FAMILY.

I'M
GOING...

...HE
MUMBLED
UNDER HIS
BREATH.



I'LL
DEFIN-
ITELY...
PAY YOU
BACK.



I HAVEN'T
LOST
ANYTHING.

MY GRAND-
MOTHER'S
HOUSE
FETCHED
A HIGHER
PRICE THAN
I EXPECTED.



YOU'RE
GIVING
ME YOUR
WHOLE
LIFE.

YEAH.



...IT KIND
OF SOUNDED
LIKE A
PROPOSAL...
DON'T YOU
THINK?

HEE
HEE
HEE
HEE

...WHAT'S
THAT FACE
FOR?

Afterword.

IT'S...IT'S BEEN OVER TWO YEARS SINCE I'VE PUT A COMIC TOGETHER.

I'M MAKO. HELLO!

THIS PROJECT STARTED VERY SUDDENLY.

THE SERIALIZATION OF MINE THAT WAS BEING PUBLISHED WAS STOPPED IN THE MIDDLE.

I'M SORRY I MADE THIS STORY IN A HURRY, AND FROM CHAPTER TWO ON, I SECRETLY CHANGED REN'S CHARACTER DESIGN FROM WHAT IT HAD BEEN.

BUT NOT EVEN MY SUPERVISOR NOTICED. (OH, DID YOU? MANY MONTHS LATER!)

THIS WAS A COMIC BROUGHT TO LIFE RATHER QUICKLY, AND IT'S A MIRACLE THAT IT CAME OUT WELL. LASTLY, TO EVERYONE WHO READ THIS... AND MORE THAN ANYONE, TO THOSE OF YOU WHO PICKED UP A COPY FOR YOURSELVES, I WANT TO GIVE YOU WORDS OF GRATITUDE FROM MY HEART. THANK YOU SO MUCH!

ERISH MAKO

"BUT I GUESS THAT'S WHAT SAVED ME..."



THE END